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# NEWS RELEASES

**For Immediate Release: February 2, 2006**

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SASKATOON TO BID ON THE 2009 WORLD JUNIOR HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Saskatoon has filed an intent to bid on hosting the 2009 World Junior Hockey Championships with support from the province and the City of Saskatoon. The Saskatoon Sport Tourism bid committee officially filed a letter of intent with Hockey Canada yesterday.

Saskatchewan has a great track record of consistently hosting successful international and national events.

"We're putting the rest of Canada on notice. Saskatchewan's love of hockey, the hospitality of our people, and our Saskatchewan pride would welcome the prestigious 2009 World Junior Hockey Championships to our province," Culture, Youth and Recreation Minister Joan Beatty said.

"Our bid committee, on behalf of Saskatoon and the entire province, has taken the first step to officially biding for one of the world's most prestigious sporting events by submitting a letter of intent," said Saskatoon Mayor Don Atchison. "We are confident that the people of Saskatchewan will rally behind our efforts to bring this event back to Saskatoon and we are confident that, given the opportunity, we will once again prove to the world that Saskatchewan volunteers will turn in a gold medal performance in hosting the World Juniors."

Saskatchewan's two major host cities, Saskatoon and Regina are experienced in organizing and hosting major events and are ready to welcome the world. Saskatoon successfully hosted the 1991 World Junior Hockey Championships, and is hosting the 2006 PotashCorp Vanier Cup. The Conference Board of Canada lists Saskatoon as one of the leading cities in economic growth, and it has won the bid to host the 2007 Juno Awards. Regina recently hosted the 2003 Grey Cup and the 2005 Jeux du Canada Summer Games.

The Government of Saskatchewan and the City of Saskatoon are providing financial support for the bid and, along with other bid participants, will release funding commitment information once the bid process is complete. Bids must be filed by March 31, 2006, followed by a tough selection process. A final decision is scheduled to be made in mid-May.

Hockey has always been important to Saskatchewan. The province boasts a

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combined total of 159 years of major junior hockey in the province with teams in Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, and Prince Albert.

"An eager and vibrant volunteer base is a driving force behind any major successful event," Culture, Youth and Recreation Minister Joan Beatty said. "We are proud that Saskatchewan leads the nation in volunteerism, and our thousands of trained and experienced sports event volunteers are ready to step in to make the 2009 World Junior Hockey Championship the best ever."

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